

But since they are such large birds, and find so little of their favorite sage-brush cover, it is doubtful whether any remain in the county at present.

7. *Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*. CALIFORNIA CUCKOO. — Unmistakable Cuckoo notes were twice heard, but the birds were not discovered.

8. *Corvus corax sinuatus*. AMERICAN RAVEN. — Some strange croaks heard and a brief glimpse obtained at Hallowe'en Basin (elevation 6500 feet) entitle this bird to a place on the list of suspects.

9. *Helminthophila ruficapilla gutturalis*. CALAVERAS WARBLER. — A troop of Warblers seen in the spring migration seems referable to this species.

10. *Dendroica nigrescens*. BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER. — I believe I heard a song of this bird above Graham Harbor on Lake Chelan.

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## DESCRIPTION OF A NEW PINE GROSBEAK FROM CALIFORNIA.

BY WILLIAM W. PRICE.

### *Pinicola enucleator californica*, new subspecies. CALIFORNIA PINE GROSBEAK.

*General characters.* — "Very similar to *P. e. kodiaka*, but differs in the very much narrower bill, and the less extensive red in the plumage."<sup>1</sup> It differs from *P. e. canadensis* in the much larger, more hooked and less turgid bill, and in the almost entire absence of dark centers to the feathers on the back and scapulars. The difference in size and shape of the bill is as distinct as the difference between *Carpodacus purpureus* and *C. cassinii*.

*Type*, ♂ ad. (No. 3429, Museum Leland Stanford, Jr., University; Pyramid Peak, near Echo Post Office, El Dorado Co., California, altitude about 7500 feet, July 18, 1896; collected by W. W. Price and C. S. Dole). General color light vermilion varying on head to intense vermilion, slightly tinged with yellowish and madder-pink, and changing to ash gray on scapulars, flanks, belly and under tail-coverts. The plumage is everywhere of this color beneath the surface, giving a general appearance of

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Robert Ridgway in letter, to whom a series of the California *Pinicola* was sent for determination.

*Dimensions of Adults in Millimeters.*

Number.	Sex.	Locality.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Chord of Culmen.	Side length, lower Mandible.	Length of Gony.	Height upper Mand. at Nostril.	Length upper Mand. from Nostril.	Width upper Mandible at base.	Height of Bill.	Remarks.
*7966	♂	Silver Lake, Cal.	115	102	19	15	13	9.8	5.2	11.6	9	10	Type.
1000	♂	Pyramid Peak, Cal.	115	102	20.8	15.1	13	9.7	5.1	11	9	10.2	
1001	♂	"	110	94	19.2	14	12.8	9.8	5.2	11	9.8	10	
3429	♂	"	119	107	20	14.9	13	10	5.2	11	9.1	10.8	
3430	♂	"	108	96	20	15	12.5	10	5.1	11.1	8.9	10	
1004	♂	"	111	103	20.5	15.2	13.9	9.9	5.2	12	9	10.2	
1005	♂	"	112	95	19.9	15.2	13.2	10	5.4	12	9.5	10	
1006	♂	"	115	97	20.5	14.5	13	10	5.1	11	9.1	10.1	
Average of 8 adults.			113.1	99.5	19.9	14.8	13.1	9.9	5.2	11.2	9.1	10.1	
*7588	♂	Hamilton, Canada.	115	100	20.1	13	11	7.8	6.2	10	8.8	11	
3000	♀	"	106	94	20	14	12.8	9.6	6.3	11.1	9	11	
*7459	♀	Middlesex Co., Mass.	103	98.6	20.5	14	11.2	8.6	6.1	11	9	11.1	
Average of 3 adults.			108	97.5	20.2	13.7	11.6	8.3	6.2	10.7	8.9	11	

\* I am indebted to the Californian Academy of Sciences for the loan of these specimens.

seasonal changes or immaturity; the scapulars and feathers of the central back with only the faintest trace of dusky centers; wings and tail dusky, the middle and greater coverts tipped with whitish, tertials edged exteriorly with the same, secondaries, primaries and the tail-feathers faintly edged with grayish.

*Type*, ♀ ad. (No. 3430, Museum Leland Stanford, Jr., University; Pyramid Peak, near Echo Post Office, El Dorado Co., California, altitude about 7500 feet, July 28, 1896; collected by W. W. Price and C. S. Dole.) General color clear ash gray, the wings and tail markings similar to the male, top and sides of head, back of neck and a few splashes on breast, bright tawny yellow, the posterior upper tail-coverts with a faint wash of the same color.

Young ♂ and ♀ nearly full grown, indistinguishable, similar to the adult ♀, but plumage more tawny gray, the quills and tail-feathers slaty black, the tips of the greater coverts light fawn, the tertials broadly edged with a lighter shade of fawn; the secondaries broadly edged with grayish white, the primaries and tail-feathers narrowly edged with slate gray.

Nestlings scarcely able to leave the nest, very similar to the older young, but with the throat more distinctly tawny, plumage very immature, the first cottony plumules still persisting on the ends of the coverts.

This apparently very distinct *Pinicola* is an inhabitant of the higher Sierra Nevada Mountains of Central California. It is strictly an alpine species; I have never seen it below 7000 feet and I have taken it near timber-line. It is peculiar to the belt of tamarack pine (*Pinus murrayana*), and the beautiful red alpine fir (*Abies magnifica*), and most of the specimens taken were in groves of this latter tree. According to my observations this bird is uncommon, for, during several vacations spent in the higher Sierra, I have met with it only on rare occasions. The first time I saw this Grosbeak was on the evening of August 5, 1892, near Pyramid Peak. I was returning to my camp, along the margin of a shallow alpine lake, bordered by a dense growth of *Abies magnifica*, when a grayish bird flew fearlessly to the edge of the water within a few feet of me. The color was so very similar to that of Townsend's Solitaire, *Myadestes townsendii*, I might in the twilight have passed it for that species, had I not caught a glimpse of its large and heavy bill. I secured it, and to my surprise found it an adult female *Pinicola*, the first I had ever seen from California. I saw no more that summer though I spent over a month in the higher altitudes.

The next time I observed the species was in 1895. I obtained, June 27, a fine male near Silver Lake in Amador Co. (about 20 miles due south of Pyramid Peak), and saw on the same date a female which was evidently its mate. No more were seen in that locality, but in July of the same summer I saw two or three individuals in fir woods on Pyramid Peak, but secured none.

Last summer, 1896, I again visited Pyramid Peak, and was fortunate in getting a fine series of *Pinicola*, 20 specimens in all, and of which all but 4 were available for examination in making the present report. I was assisted in my field work by Mr. C. S. Dole, and Mr. P. O. Simons, and to their efforts is greatly due the large and interesting series.

The greater number of adults were taken on the edges of alpine pastures where salt is placed on fallen logs for stock. The Pine Grosbeak visits these 'salt licks' in company with Cassin's Purple Finch and the Western Evening Grosbeak, and was at all times exceedingly fearless and unsuspicious. The males have a very pleasing song, and hearing it upon one occasion, I thought it resembled the song of *Carpodacus cassinii*. Their call-note is not loud and grating like the note of the Evening Grosbeak.

They breed late, as attested by two nestlings brought to me July 29, by a camper, who found them on the lower branches of a fir in a wild glen at the western base of Pyramid Peak, at about 9000 feet elevation. He did not see any nest, nor did the parent birds put in an appearance. The same day Mr. Dole and Mr. Simons each obtained a young specimen, perhaps five days older. These could fly quite easily. On August 3, while collecting in a forest of fir east of Pyramid Peak, Mr. Dole obtained two additional young, which were nearly full grown. The female parent which was feeding them was also secured.

The crop and stomach of an adult contained the soft leaf ends of *Pinus murrayana* and *Abies magnifica*, besides seeds and portions of various insects.

I have taken the following notes from Mr. Belding's 'Land Birds of the Pacific District': "L. B.—Summit, Central Pacific Railroad (Placer Co.), August 11, 1882, tolerably common; from June 23 to July 10, 1885, an adult male and female feeding in alders; during this time these only; but later in August and

September, not rare, in fact rather common. Blood's (Calaveras Co.), July 16, 1880, shot an adult female which probably had a nest; specimen sent to the Smithsonian Institution."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. A. K. Fisher in his report on the birds of the Death Valley expedition,<sup>2</sup> says of this species: "Mr. Nelson saw a fine adult male Pine Grosbeak in brilliant plumage on the head of the San Joaquin River, July 30 (1891). This individual was the only one seen during the year."

I have described this form as a subspecies somewhat in opposition to the canons of the American Ornithologists' Union, for I have seen no examples of intergradation. However, these may be expected from the higher mountains northward, the Sierra form being the most southern representative of the genus.

Unlike the Pine Grosbeaks living in the far north, these birds probably find it unnecessary to migrate any great distance in winter. If the weather is too severe on the alpine summits, they can in a moment drop down into the deep cañons which furrow the western flank of the Sierra, and find a temperate climate and abundance of food.

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## CRITICAL REMARKS ON *CISTOTHORUS PALUSTRIS* (WILS.) AND ITS WESTERN ALLIES.

BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER.

THE typical form of *Cistothorus palustris* inhabits the greater portion of the eastern United States and southern British America, west to at least Kansas and Manitoba. Upon the Pacific Coast it is replaced by *Cistothorus p. paludicola* of Baird; while the birds

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<sup>1</sup> Land Birds of the Pacific District, by Lyman Belding. Occasional Papers of the Calif. Acad. of Sciences, II, 1890, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> North American Fauna, No. 7, Pt. II, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, 1893, p. 79.